

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2950

UNCLAS MELBOURNE 1367

E O 11652 N A

TAGS: AS, AMGT

SUBJ: FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON TRIP TO TASMANIA AUGUST 20, 21, 22

REF: A) MELBOURNE 1348 B) MELBOURNE 301 (NOTAL)

1. IN ADDITION TO DRAFTING REFTEL LABATT REPORTED TO CONGEN THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATION: ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS WITH TASMANIAN UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTE WERE MADE BY LOREN SMITH, SECRETARY OF THE AUSTRALIAN/AMERICAN ASSOCIATION IN TASMANIA. LABATT HAD NOT MET SMITH BEFORE AND CHARACTERISES HIM AS A WELL-INFORMED AND WELL-CONNECTED AMERICAN WHO IS RENDERING A VARIETY OF SERVICES TO OUR CITIZENS IN PARTICULAR AND TO THE COMMUNITY IN GENERAL. SMITH, WHO IS A RETIRED AIR FORCE MAJOR, HAS LIVED IN HOBART FOR 12 YEARS AND IT WAS EVIDENT TO LABATT THAT HE HAS BECOME THE CENTRE OF AMERICAN INTEREST AND GOODWILL IN AN AREA WELL BEYOND THE CONFINES OF THAT CITY. DURING HIS VISIT LABATT MET WITH ABOUT A DOZEN LEADERS IN BOTH LAUNCESTON AND HOBART AND FOUND THAT MANY VOLUNTEERED FAVOURABLE OPINIONS OF SMITH, AND OBVIOUSLY LOOKED TO HIM AS A READY REFERENCE POINT ON AMERICAN MATTERS. OBSERVEDLY, HE HAS USED HIS UNOFFICIAL CONTACT WITH U.S.I.S. IN CONGEN MELBOURNE TO PROMOTE A SERIES OF EVENTS INCLUDING SOME RECENT VISUAL AID PROMOTION. LABATT WAS NOT AWARE BEFORE HIS TRIP THAT SMITH HAD BENN CONGEN'S NOMINEE AS CONSULAR AGENT FOR TASMANIA AND HE TOLD CONGEN THAT HE ENDORSES THE IDEA HEARTILY.

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2. CONGEN FORWARDS THE ABOVE WITH THE COMMENT THAT LABATT'S GOOD EXPERIENCE WITH SMITH HAS BEEN MATCHED

BY SEVERAL RECENT VISITORS TO TASMANIA, WHICH IS ONLY
ONE OF SIX AUSTRALIAN STATES IN WHICH WE HAVE NO
USG PRESENCE.
BRAND

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